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ABSTRACT

The result of a workshop on the holistic scoring of compositions, this guide is intended to help elementary school teachers evaluate more thoroughly their students' writing. Following an introduction to the handbook's origins, the first section discusses elements of holistic scoring, including procedures for preparation, scoring, and interpreting the results. The second section discusses analytic scoring, including a dictation method and scoring instructions for each grade from second through sixth. A third section discusses peer editing, and the guide concludes with comments on other possible uses for the instruments and information it contains. (HTH)

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Oral and Written Communications

Handbook for Assessing Composition

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INTRODUCTION

This Handbook for Assessing Composition developed from a pilot project sponsored by the Oral and Written Communications Task Force of the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI) of Washington State. The staff of McLane Elementary School decided to make writing improvement its thrust for the coming year. At that time, spring of 1982, Gloria Prevost, the Task Force Chairperson, was looking for an interested faculty with whom to place a project.

The project began with a workshop on holistic scoring with Jim Sabol of Seattle Pacific University, Director of Writing Northwest, and English project leader for the Bellevue School District. After collecting writing samples from all the children in the school (grades 2-5), the staff scored the papers holistically, developing a high level of reliability.

At the end of the holistic scoring workshop, the teachers at each grade level identified the aspects of writing that underlay their judgments during the scoring. At each grade level, the same aspects seemed to emerge, and from those the PILGOU Scales (See page 7) were developed for assessment. In order to assess four of the aspects identified (punctuation, capitalization, spelling and handwriting) dictées were developed for grades 2 to 6. The dictées with scoring keys are presented in this handbook (See pages 13-23) as well as materials for developing additional dictees as necessary.

Following Jim Sabol's workshop, another workshop was conducted by Anne Gere and Ralph Stevens of the University of Washington. Anne is Director and Ralph is Assistant Director of the Puget Sound Writing Project. They took the important aspects of writing that the staff had identified and demonstrated practical ways in which each aspect could be developed and how progress might be measured. Following that workshop, Paula Stone, Coordinator of Basic Skills in the Olympia School District, and Harry Johnson of the SPI Task Force, conducted mini-sessions during the year to follow up the workshop training received and to produce additional materials for this handbook.

The entire McLane staff, under the leadership of its principal, Barbara Eliason, developed monthly school-wide writing themes, found some ways of "showcasing" children's writing, redefined staff holistic scoring skills and developed strategies in peer editing and analytic assessment.

Some of the greatest values of the project were by-products. For instance, communication and cooperation among the staff reached its highest level, and they came to appreciate the significance of the notion that composition involves stages: prewriting, to get some ideas together; putting the ideas in organized, written form; polishing and editing for final publication. The parents with whom the staff worked more fully appreciated the importance of helping children at each stage by suggesting ideas at the first stage, helping with the organization at the second stage and not worrying about spelling, handwriting and such details until the final process. The children are doing a lot of writing as a result of the project and are obviously enjoying it. With the editing the students are doing for themselves and others, they are turning out quality products hoped for from the beginning.

HOLISTIC SCORING

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of holistic scoring is to score a group of papers quickly and easily and yet get a reliable ball-park score for each paper. With practice, teachers can produce very reliable scores, and the scores can be used to compare groups, to look at before-and-after progress, or to assess individual student's improvement. Further, the same papers can be used for a quick analytic score on the major aspects of composition, for diagnostic information that can be used to plan instruction, for grouping students for instruction, or for reporting to parents and students.

GENERAL PREPARATION FOR HOLISTIC SCORING

Plan to give each child two days to complete the writing so the child can:

a. Have time to write thoughtfully on the first day,

b. Think about it, talk about it, sleep on it, etc., and

c. Rewrite, correct, polish, etc. on the second day.

Do not let more than one day intervene between the "first" and "second" day.

The children may use dictionaries and/or other references. They may not take the papers home. The papers should be collected at the end of both writing periods (first and second days).

You can estimate the lessons taking the following number of minutes each day:

Grade	I	II	III	IV	V
Time	30	35	40	45	50

It might be well to have the students keep a book or other assignment ready to work on when they finish.

DETAILS OF PROCEDURE FOR COLLECTING WRITING SAMPLE FOR HOLISTIC SCORING

TIME: The writing samples should be collected over two days' time, preferably two successive days.

PAPER: The kind of paper used should be the same for all writers in the same grade or, if two or more grades are to be scored together, the same scoring group.

INSTRUMENT: Writers may write with whatever instrument they are most familiar and comfortable.

STEP 1 Distribute paper and point out the supply of extra sheets for writers needing it.

STEP 2 If you have not already put their name, the date, and your name (the teacher's) on the papers, have them do so. Place the name so you won't see it later when you score the paper.

STEP 3 Display the essay question on the board, on a chart, or on individual handouts and read it aloud, to be sure all writers know it.

STEP 4 Tell your writers how much time will be allowed for writing. Don't over-react to the time limits. The idea is not to be rushed, to have enough time to do one's best work.

STEP 5 Encourage writers all you can without directly assisting them.

FOR EXAMPLE

DO	DON'T
Tell writers why we're doing this: "to see how much they improve over a period of time."	Scare them. Connect this to grades in any way.
Tell writers anything that puts their minds at ease and encourages them to turn in a serious piece of work.	Tell writers exactly what to do. NO SPECIFIC HINTS. NO REMINDERS. (e.g. "Don't forget the punctuation.")
If a writer finishes in two minutes, encourage the writer to do a "complete" job, and then drop it. Don't force.	Tell writers they must write every minute using all the time.
Let a writer use the dictionary who asks to do so (because that writer is exhibiting his or her normal behavior).	Urge all writers to use the dictionary (because that would be an outside stimulant).

When in doubt, remember that the idea is to obtain a writing sample, as accurate as we can make it of the way the writer writes right now, supervised but otherwise unaided and unprompted.

STEP 6 Collect the papers at the end of the first day's time. Assure the writers that they will have additional time (tomorrow, hopefully) to finish their writing.

STEP 7 On the second day, distribute the papers started on the first day.

STEP 8 Tell your writers how much time will be allowed today and tell them to improve their papers as much as possible. Again, point out the supply of extra paper for those who need it.

STEP 9 At the end of the time allowed, collect all papers asking them to make certain that each paper bears the writer's name, the date and the teacher's name clearly written.

PROCEDURE FOR HOLISTIC SCORING

Your purpose in scoring these papers should be to get a reliable, unbiased rating of each paper's overall quality. Do everything you can to accomplish this. Scoring papers with another teacher of the same or the next grade level is a great idea. By scoring each other's papers you eliminate the natural bias from recognizing your own students' papers.

To score the papers, first browse through them getting a general idea of the overall quality. Continue the browsing until you have identified a "range finder" paper you consider very good, one good, one weak, and one very weak. The very good "range finder" should be roughly representative of the best papers (not the very best), the good one should be roughly representative of the next level of the papers, etc. Of course, the very weak "range finder" should not be the weakest paper.

Next, lay the "range finder" papers out and mark them 1, 2, 3 and 4. Now, go through the rest of the papers and put those similar to the "1" in overall quality on top of the "1"; put those similar to the "2" on top of the "2"; etc. Put "1's" on the papers in the first pile, "2's" on those in the second, etc.

INTERPRETING THE RESULTS OF HOLISTIC SCORING

Record the scores of each paper in your grade book. Also, make copies of your four range finder papers and keep all of these original papers.

After you have completed a term or a unit in composition, you can give the students the same writing assignment in the same way. Shuffle the old papers in with the new papers. Using the original range finders, see how

your group has improved, who has improved, and by how much. In most cases, just looking at the papers (original and new) side by side with the student and/or parents will demonstrate the improvement.

The papers will not help you plan your instruction unless you apply analytic scoring and the PILGOU Scales to the same papers.

ANALYTIC SCORING

THE PILGOU SCALES

The PILGOU Scales developed from a lot of hard work on the part of every member of the McLane Elementary School project staff. After considerable brainstorming, listing, discussing, sorting and refining, it was found that staff used, generally, the same ten factors in holistically scoring their papers in grades 2 to 5.

Six of the ten factors which emerged from all our deliberations were:

PURPOSE -- Clearly to the point assigned

INFORMATION -- Supportive of main idea

LANGUAGE -- Words well chosen and interesting

GRAMMAR -- Rules followed

ORGANIZATION -- Logical sequence of thought, well paragraphed

USAGE -- Words properly used

A rating scale for those elements was developed, the PILGOU Scales.

RATING THE HOLISTIC SCORING PAPERS

For the six factors identified a teacher can rate the students' holistically scored papers by thinking of the level of performance he/she expects by the end of the year and rating the papers accordingly.

Rate each of the papers on one of the six factors and then the next factor. That is, first go through all of the papers and rate them on the Purpose, the degree to which the writer sticks to the point assigned. Let a "4" rating represent the achievement goal for the year. All papers are evaluated according to this goal.

After you have scored a paper on Purpose, mark the score on the writer's "Assessment Record for a Composition" (page 9). When you have scored (rated) all the papers on Purpose and recorded them on the assessment record, rate them on Information (record them), Language, etc. Since the record sheets are kept in the same order as the papers and since the scoring is holistic, impressionistic fashion, it is fast. When done, you have some valuable data; a partial profile for each student from which you can derive either reports or teaching plans.

To complete the profile, the easiest course to follow is to use dictees (See pages 13-18) according to your goals on the "McLane Inventory of Capitalization and Punctuation Goals" (page 11), and "Scoring Instructions" (pages 19-23).

ASSESSMENT RECORD FOR A COMPOSITION

WRITER _____ DATE _____

COMPOSITION _____ RATER _____

	PILGOU RATINGS (Not at all … Very well)	WEIGHT	SCORE
PURPOSE			
Clearly to the point assigned	1 2 3 4	____	____
INFORMATION			
Supportive of main idea	1 2 3 4	____	____
LANGUAGE			
Words well-chosen and interesting	1 2 3 4	____	____
GRAMMAR			
Rules followed	1 2 3 4	____	____
ORGANIZATION			
Logical sequence of thought, well paragraphed	1 2 3 4	____	____
USAGE			
Words properly used	1 2 3 4	____	____
	DICTÉE RATINGS		
CAPITALIZATION	1 2 3 4	____	____
PUNCTUATION	1 2 3 4	____	____
HANDWRITING	1 2 3 4	____	____
SPELLING	1 2 3 4	____	____

You now have information on which to base plans for a) instruction, b) grouping for instruction, and 3) holding conferences with parents and/or students.

McLANE INVENTORY OF CAPITALIZATION AND PUNCTUATION GOALS

With the help of the 22 items below (a-m and a-i), identify your capitalization and punctuation goals for the grade(s) you teach. For each item, circle only the grade(s) to which the item applies. For example, a fourth grade teacher would circle all the 4's that represented his/her goals.

# # #

I strive to be sure that, by the end of the school year, the children in my class, when they write, capitalize the first letter of every:

a.	Sentence	1	2	3	4	5
b.	Item in an outline	1	2	3	4	5
c.	Item in a list	1	2	3	4	5
d.	Salutation in a letter	1	2	3	4	5
e.	Complimentary close in a letter	1	2	3	4	5
f.	Person's name	1	2	3	4	5
g.	Place's name	1	2	3	4	5
h.	Thing's official name	1	2	3	4	5
i.	Title such as Ms., Mrs., Mr., Miss or Dr.	1	2	3	4	5
j.	Title of something written	1	2	3	4	5
k.	Day of the week	1	2	3	4	5
l.	Month of the year	1	2	3	4	5
m.	Holiday	1	2	3	4	5

I strive to be sure that, by the end of the school year, the children in my class follow these practices in punctuation:

a.	Put a period at the end of every statement or command.	1	2	3	4	5
b.	Put a question mark at the end of every question.	1	2	3	4	5
c.	Put an exclamation point at the end of every exclamation.	1	2	3	4	5

d.	Put an apostrophe before "s" to show possession.	1	2	3	4	5
e.	Put quotation marks around quotations.	1	2	3	4	5
f.	Put a comma before "and" or "but" in a compound sentence.	1	2	3	4	5
g.	Put commas after all but the last item of any series of three or more (or last two items).	1	2	3	4	5
h.	Put commas between the names of cities and their states.	1	2	3	4	5
i.	In a date, put a comma between the day of the month and the year.	1	2	3	4	5

P.S. List below any additional capitalization or punctuation goals you expect your children to reach by the end of the school year.

DIRECTIONS FOR ADMINISTRATION

1. Make sure the children have the materials necessary for writing.

2. Say:

   "I am going to dictate a letter to you.

   "I want you to write the letter on your paper, <u>without asking any questions.</u>

   "I will dictate the letter a line at a time.

   "I will dictate a sentence at a time.

   "Spell and write everything as well as you can.

   "I will repeat each line or sentence.

   "Take your time and do a good job.

   "Are there any questions before we start?"

3. If anyone asks whether spelling "counts" or handwriting "counts", etc., tell them to do their best in every way.

4. Tell them on which line to begin, if lined paper is to be used.

5. Read parenthetical instructions to them, explaining as necessary.

6. Follow the procedure described in Step 2, above. <u>Do not help</u> with spelling, capitalization or punctuation. <u>Do not allow</u> them to use dictionaries. Hopefully, there will be no need to discuss these restrictions. Read each line and each sentence often enough to give every child a chance to succeed. Move slowly enough that they can produce their best handwriting and not overlook anything due to haste.

7. When they have finished writing, collect all papers.

8. <u>Do not discuss any part</u> of the letter with any of the children. You, or some other teacher, may want to use the letter again. In a parent conference, you may want to show the child's work to the mother or father to give evidence of growth.

9. Follow the "Scoring Instructions" on pages 19 through 23.

McLANE DICTÉE

Grade 2

(Start at the left-hand margin and write . . .) dear bill (Now, go down to the next line and start at the left-hand margin and write . . .) can you go to the dog show (End of sentence) it is today (End of sentence. Now start in the middle of the next line and write . . .)

see you there

(Below "see you there", write your name.)

McLANE DICTÉE

Grade 3

(Start at the left-hand margin and write . . .) dear pat (Now, go down to the next line and start at the left-hand margin and write . . .)

did you hear about bob s birthday party last week (End of sentence) his mother gave us ice cream cake and pop (End of sentence) he got sixteen gifts (End of sentence) wow (End of sentence) (Now start in the middle of the next line and write . . .)

yours

(Below "yours" write your name.)

McLANE DICTÉE

Grade 4

(Start at the left-hand margin and write . . .) dear jack (Now, go down to the next line and start at the left-hand margin and write . . .) we are planning to camp at stone lake next summer and i intend to bring my fishing pole (End of sentence. Now go down to the next line and start at the left-hand margin and write . . .)

i m worried (End of sentence) a bear lived in a cave near there two years ago (End of sentence) do you think he s moved (End of sentence. Now start in the middle of the next line and write . . .)

yours truly

(Below "yours truly," sign your name.)

McLANE DICTÉE

Grade 5

(Starting in the middle of the line, write . . .) olympia washington
(Starting in the middle of the next line, write . . .) november 14 1982
(Go down three lines, start at the left-hand margin, and write . . .)
dear june (Start at the left-hand margin in the next line and write . . .)
next fall several mixed baseball teams will be starting (End of sentence)
at least half the players on the field must be girls including the pitcher
(End of sentence) the places listed are all in the southwest because
member clubs will welcome sunshine (End of sentence. Start at the
left-hand margin of the next line and write . . .)
don't you believe we should organize something here (End of sentence)
(Starting in the middle of the next line, write . . .)

your future team captain

(Below "your future team captain," sign your name.)

McLANE DICTÉE

Grade 6

(Starting in the middle of the line, write . . .)

olympia washington

(Starting in the middle of the next line, write . . .)

september 20 1982

(Go down three lines, start at the left-hand margin, and write . . .)

dear miss brothers (Start at the left-hand margin in the next line and write . . .)

in your column last month you said i watched seattle winning a dramatic victory over salt lake city (End of sentence and end of paragraph. Go down two lines and write . . .)

frankly i m ashamed of the treatment the natives here have shown visitors (End of sentence) i wonder why other cities have chosen to sign a contract with us (End of sentence. Starting in the middle of the next line, write. . .)

your regular reader

(Below "your regular reader," sign your name.)

WRITER _____ DATE _____

McLANE DICTÉE

GRADE 2

SCORING INSTRUCTIONS

STANDARDS FOR END-OF-YEAR (Check boxes before items expected. Then duplicate one copy of this form for each paper to be evaluated.)

Capitalization	Punctuation	Handwriting	Spelling
☐ Dear	☐ Bill,	Teacher: Use your subjective, end-of-year expectations.	Teacher: Use your subjective, end-of-year expectations.
☐ Bill	☐ show?		
☐ Can	☐ today.		
☐ It	☐ there,		
☐ See			

RATINGS IN TERMS OF MEETING END-OF-YEAR EXPECTATIONS:

	Not at all	Some-what	Fairly well	Very Well
Capitalization	1	2	3	4
Punctuation	1	2	3	4
Handwriting	1	2	3	4
Spelling	1	2	3	4

Now transfer the four scores for this writer to his/her copy of "Assessment Record for a Composition."

WRITER _____ DATE _____

McLANE DICTÉE

GRADE 3

SCORING INSTRUCTIONS

STANDARDS FOR END-OF-YEAR (Check boxes before items expected. Then duplicate one copy of this form for each paper to be evaluated.)

Capitalization	Punctuation	Handwriting	Spelling
☐ Dear	☐ Pat,	Teacher: Use your subjective, end-of-year expectations.	Teacher: Use your subjective, end-of-year expectations.
☐ Pat	☐ Bob's		
☐ Did	☐ week?		
☐ Bob s	☐ ice cream, cake, and pop*		
☐ His			
☐ He	☐ pop.		
☐ Wow	☐ gifts!**		
☐ Yours	☐ Wow!		
	☐ Yours,		

RATINGS IN TERMS OF MEETING END-OF-YEAR EXPECTATIONS:

	Not at all	Some-what	Fairly well	Very Well
Capitalization	1	2	3	4
Punctuation	1	2	3	4
Handwriting	1	2	3	4
Spelling	1	2	3	4

*or ice cream, cake and pop -- whichever you teach.
**or gifts.

Now transfer the four scores for this writer to his/her copy of "Assessment Record for a Composition."

WRITER _____ DATE _____

McLANE DICTÉE

GRADE 4

SCORING INSTRUCTIONS

STANDARDS FOR END-OF-YEAR (Check boxes before items expected. Then duplicate one copy of this form for each paper to be evaluated.)

Capitalization	Punctuation	Handwriting	Spelling
☐ Dear	☐ Jack,	Teacher: Use your subjective, end-of-year expectations.	Teacher: Use your subjective, end-of-year expectations.
☐ Jack	☐ summer,		
☐ We	☐ pole.		
☐ Stone Lake	☐ worried!*		
☐ I	☐ ago.		
☐ I m	☐ moved?		
☐ A	☐ truly,		
☐ Do			
☐ Yours			

RATINGS IN TERMS OF MEETING END-OF-YEAR EXPECTATIONS:

	Not at all	Some-what	Fairly well	Very Well
Capitalization	1	2	3	4
Punctuation	1	2	3	4
Handwriting	1	2	3	4
Spelling	1	2	3	4

*or worried.

Now transfer the four scores for this writer to his/her copy of "Assessment Record for a Composition."

WRITER _____ DATE _____

McLANE DICTÉE

GRADE 5

SCORING INSTRUCTIONS

STANDARDS FOR END-OF-YEAR (Check boxes before items expected. Then duplicate one copy of this form for each paper to be evaluated.)

Capitalization	Punctuation	Handwriting	Spelling
		Teacher: Use your subjective, end-of-year expectations.	Teacher: Use your subjective, end-of-year expectations.
☐ Olympia	☐ Olympia,		
☐ Washington	☐ 14,		
☐ November	☐ June.		
☐ Dear	☐ starting.		
☐ June	☐ girls,		
☐ Next	☐ pitcher.		
☐ At	☐ Southwest,		
☐ The	☐ sunshine.		
☐ Southwest	☐ Don't		
☐ Don t	☐ here?		
☐ Your	☐ captain,		

RATINGS IN TERMS OF MEETING END-OF-YEAR EXPECTATIONS:

	Not at all	Some-what	Fairly well	Very Well
Capitalization	1	2	3	4
Punctuation	1	2	3	4
Handwriting	1	2	3	4
Spelling	1	2	3	4

Now transfer the four scores for this writer to his/her copy of "Assessment Record for a Composition."

WRITER _____ DATE _____

McLANE DICTÉE

GRADE 6

SCORING INSTRUCTIONS

STANDARDS FOR END-OF-YEAR (Check boxes before items expected. Then duplicate one copy of this form for each paper to be evaluated.)

Capitalization	Punctuation	Handwriting	Spelling
☐ Olympia	☐ Olympia,	Teacher: Use your subjective, end-of-year expectations.	Teacher: Use your subjective, end-of-year expectations.
☐ Washington	☐ 20, 1982		
☐ September	☐ Brothers,		
☐ Dear	☐ City.		
☐ Miss	☐ Frankly,		
☐ Brothers	☐ I'm		
☐ In	☐ visitors.		
☐ Seattle	☐ us.		
☐ Salt Lake City	☐ reader,		
☐ Frankly			
☐ I m			
☐ I			
☐ Your			

RATINGS IN TERMS OF MEETING END-OF-YEAR EXPECTATIONS:

	Not at all	Some-what	Fairly well	Very Well
Capitalization	1	2	3	4
Punctuation	1	2	3	4
Handwriting	1	2	3	4
Spelling	1	2	3	4

Now transfer the four scores for this writer to his/her copy of "Assessment Record for a Composition."

SPELLING WORDS

The set of suggested spelling words presented for each grade from 2 to 6 in this appendix was drawn from The New Iowa Spelling Scale by Harry A. Greene (Iowa City, IA: State University of Iowa, 1954).* Each word was included because the statistics given in that report suggested that the word was learned by most children in that grade level. That is, most of the children did not know the word in the previous grade and a large majority did know it in the grade indicated. When we say "in the grade," we mean "in November of the grade." So, most of the children could have learned the word in the spring or summer preceding the tests. For every word in The New Iowa Spelling Scale, there is one grade level at which the percent of children who spelled the word correctly increased more than for any other grade level. That is the level at which the word was assigned. In this list, the increase in percent is quite dramatic (at least twenty percent). The grade 2 words are words which were correctly spelled by at least half of the second graders. It is assumed that most of those words could not be spelled by most of the children the November before (in grade 1). So, to follow the definition described above, they are second grade words.

It is suggested that the teacher compose dictées comparable to those in this handbook using mostly words "from the grade level in question," plus a few harder words to challenge good spellers.

*The same scale has since been republished (1976) as a "revised edition," but the statistics are the same. It is assumed that most spelling words are learned from experiences outside the school which do not change much from decade to decade. We must make that assumption until this study is replicated.

SUGGESTED GRADE 2 WORDS*

all	61%	cow	57%	look	76%	sat	55%
am	66	day	65	looks	67	see	98
and	73	days	52	man	59	sees	53
at	68	do	67	may	52	she	73
ball	62	dog	72	me	82	six	56
balls	50	dogs	54	my	81	so	70
be	61	go	86	no	72	ten	52
bed	52	good	70	not	76	the	83
book	69	had	50	oh	59	this	51
books	67	hat	57	old	56	toy	55
boy	75	be	77	on	74	to	61
boys	64	her	58	one	62	two	55
can	69	hill	51	ones	50	up	73
car	69	in	76	pig	58	we	77
cars	50	into	64	play	61	will	73
cat	81	is	89	ran	54	yes	77
cats	67	it	83	rat	50	you	74
come	79	its	56	red	58	big	61
comes	50	like	52	run	51		

*The New Iowa Spelling Scale by Harry A. Greene (Iowa City, IA: State University of Iowa, 1954) reported that over forty-nine percent of second graders spelled these words correctly in November. The numbers presented above are the percentages reported.

SUGGESTED GRADE 3 WORDS*

ago	82%	for	78%	last	73%	sum	79%
baby	74	fun	75	May	70	tell	71
bed	79	goods	70	men	76	time	82
bell	71	got	73	milk	70	well	73
box	75	gray	70	mother	79	your	73
but	88	green	82	name	73	to-day**	92
cake	74	has	71	new	73	top	70
call	75	have	79	now	73	town	71
cap	77	hay	71	or	70	toys	78
cold	72	hen	70	out	89	tree	81
did	84	him	79	pet	70	trees	75
doing	72	his	85	saw	79	us	75
doll	73	home	77	say	76	was	76
eat	86	hot	79	sing	70	way	79
fat	71	how	80	some	74	week	71
five	70	if	77	stop	71		

*The New Iowa Spelling Scale reported that in November over 69% of third graders but less than 50% of second graders could spell these words. The percentages presented above were the percentages reported for third graders.

**This word was spelled with a hyphen in 1954.

SUGGESTED GRADE 4 WORDS*

added	71%	class	78%	fine	71%	lakes	73%
afternoon	73	clean	72	fishing	72	lamp	70
age	74	colder	73	fix	72	law	70
arm	72	coming	72	football	74	left	78
art	74	corn	74	forget	71	light	80
aside	73	cost	74	four	75	liked	73
asleep	71	dance	70	full	71	lived	75
band	77	dark	73	funny	76	longer	71
bay	79	date	73	fur	72	low	77
bear	75	die	73	gas	72	map	79
becomes	73	dig	70	gate	74	March	70
bedtime	74	dish	70	God	75	mark	73
belong	78	don't	77	gray	70	mean	72
beside	76	dress	75	hands	74	meat	77
better	70	dry	72	hard	80	Monday	80
body	71	duck	75	having	73	move	75
both	71	dust	72	helped	75	moved	76
bring	81	each	82	helping	75	mud	71
butter	73	even	72	ink	73	never	76
camp	75	every	78	keep	79	next	74
care	71	eye	71	kill	74	nut	82
carry	70	face	76	kiss	80	overcome	71
cave	71	farm	77	know	70	overlook	75
cent	74	feed	74	lake	85	paying	73

(Continued)

pick	72%	shop	73%	start	72%	train	72%
playhouse	71	sit	74	stone	77	trip	71
pole	70	sky	72	store	76	try	73
poor	70	slow	72	story	72	wind	73
pest	75	sold	73	stove	76	wing	71
reading	73	something	76	street	75	winter	73
road	72	sometime	79	summer	78	wishing	74
rock	71	son	82	supper	72	word	71
role	70	song	81	taking	70	words	72
sea	74	south	71	tea	79	years	76
sell	70	spell	70	test	77	yellow	73
sent	77	spelling	74	than	70	yours	73
ship	71	spring	70	thank	77		
ships	71	stand	74	things	75		

*The New Iowa Spelling Scale reported that in November over 69% of fourth graders but less than 50% of third graders could spell these words. The percentages presented above were the percentages reported for fourth graders.

SUGGESTED GRADE 5 WORDS*

acting	70%	crossed	71%	horse	72%	phone	71%
anybody	76	crossing	74	hung	70	places	71
awoke	75	cutting	73	kinds	72	plan	71
baseball	82	deal	79	lack	77	pleased	81
beef	70	December	72	laws	76	point	70
beloved	70	didn't	76	leading	71	port	86
bless	72	discount	71	lip	73	protest	71
blind	73	drinking	78	listed	70	prove	77
bond	72	drinks	71	loving	73	rains	73
bottle	75	driven	70	maid	73	recover	85
brain	70	easy	71	main	73	removed	76
branch	70	everybody	74	member	71	rented	75
broke	79	everywhere	70	mixed	73	reported	73
cabin	70	fact	70	navy	71	reporting	72
cared	70	fellow	70	needed	76	reports	71
charge	70	file	77	noise	70	returning	71
check	71	fireplace	71	November	70	role	70
church	71	follow	70	office	74	rub	73
cloud	70	grape	71	order	72	rules	75
clubs	74	hammer	72	outstanding	70	rushing	70
coal	70	handle	77	ox	72	sack	70
cotton	75	hang	70	pain	74	self	71
country	70	hardly	74	pains	73	shape	71
covered	75	helpless	71	pea	71	shipment	77

(Continued)

shirt	71%	spoil	71%	temper	71%	trunk	74%
should	76	stable	71	thanked	74	trust	71
shout	74	started	70	thankful	70	unless	74
slowly	70	starting	74	thinking	73	wagon	70
smaller	70	stick	74	thinks	73	weed	70
smile	71	suit	75	tiny	75	welcome	73
snows	71	sunny	72	together	70	wheel	70
soil	79	sunshine	76	ton	72	wonder	70
somewhere	70	tables	73	tons	71	wool	75
southwest	71	teams	74	tower	70	yourself	76
space	72	teeth	75	trail	77		

*The New Iowa Spelling Scale reported that in November over 69% of fifth graders but less than 50% of fourth graders could spell these words. The percentages presented above were the percentages reported for fifth graders.

SUGGESTED GRADE 6 WORDS*

allow	70%	frame	78%	natives	72%	stuff	75%
ashamed	72	frankly	72	object	70	subject	78
babies	70	fund	73	offering	72	supply	70
backward	78	guy	71	pleases	71	swift	73
banner	72	habits	71	poem	74	tracer	72
blaze	73	hardware	73	problem	71	treatment	72
boards	73	idea	70	protect	72	tumble	71
chosen	70	impress	73	provide	71	union	71
cities	71	invented	71	question	78	useful	76
contains	70	kicked	70	request	72	value	75
contract	70	knot	73	rocky	70	victory	70
cottage	73	known	73	romance	71	village	76
couple	71	labor	74	serve	70	watched	70
elect	76	locate	72	shown	70	we'll	70
empty	75	location	70	sign	70	winning	71
exchange	71	membership	76	sized	73	you'll	70
expose	71	mild	72	southern	72		
factory	70	moments	70	stare	71		
fairly	72	native	75	station	80		

*The New Iowa Spelling Scale reported that in November over 69% of sixth graders but less than 50% of fifth graders could spell these words. The percentages presented above were the percentages reported for sixth graders.

PEER EDITING

An important way of reducing your paper load as a teacher and, at the same time, greatly sharpening your students' writing skills is Peer Editing. Peer Editing can readily be built around the "Assessment Record for a Composition" and the "McLane Inventory of Capitalization and Punctuation Goals." Superior students can refine their composition skills, deepen their concepts, and improve their social skills. Weaker students get the intensive practice where they need it most. Peer Editing was used in grades 3, 4 and 5.

The steps to Peer Editing are simple. First, have the entire class complete a brief, clear writing assignment. Next, form teams of two or three students each, with one from the upper academic third in each team and one or two from the rest of the class. (These teams may be relatively permanent for the year.) Then assign to each team one of the ten items on the "Assessment Record for a Composition." Give each team a few of the papers and have them look at them, discuss them, and agree on a PILGOU rating of "their" item for the few papers they are examining. If the teams are sitting in a circle, you can then rotate the little sets of papers so that each team has a new set and continue rotating the papers until all of them are rated on all elements. The teams which have punctuation and capitalization may use the "McLane Inventory of Capitalization and Punctuation Goals" to help them, or they may divide those goals among themselves, and each rate a few. Thus, a student who needs to concentrate on a few of the punctuation goals can do so. You, as the teacher, can assign the items or goals you think appropriate.

You may agree that as an alternative teaching strategy it may be better to have the whole class concentrate on one or two of the ten elements of the "Assessment Record for a Composition" and have only a few little teams of "editors" doing the ratings. They can then explain their ratings to the writers. In this approach, each paper doesn't have as many marks and scores on it, either.

The project staff found that, since the weaker students could not correct the papers of the top students and since the weaker students took longer to make their corrections after they got their edited papers back, it was best to spend the last part of the period with the weaker students in one group making their corrections with the top students working in another group, editing each other's paper and making their corrections. This alternative procedure, using two groups at the end of the period, worked very well in all of the classrooms using Peer Editing.

CLOSING COMMENTS

As you may already have concluded, the instruments and information provided in this handbook have many uses besides those described. For instance, the "Assessment Record for a Composition" has spaces for weights and scores in the right-hand margin. You may want to do as the project staff did and assign different weights to the ten different elements. An easy way to do that is to begin by giving 25 points to each element and then transfering points from one element to another as you consider appropriate. In that way, you have weights totaling 250 points and a total possible score of 1,000 points. That total score should, theoretically, correlate positively with the holistic score you gave the paper. Some researchers say that weighting part scores in this manner doesn't do much good. You'll get just as reliable and valid a total score by simply adding the ten PILGOU ratings.

Staff also found that summarizing the results of the "McLane Inventory of Capitalization and Punctuation Goals" was of value. It took about three or four minutes for all of staff to complete the inventory in a staff meeting. It took Harry Johnson about ten minutes more to combine them into a school-wide scope and sequence in punctuation and capitalization. We then had our own conclusions to use in rating the dictées and other papers on capitalization and punctuation for the rest of the year. The inventories were also invaluable in explaining our goals in those topics to others, such as, parents, substitutes, students, and colleagues.

To mention one more idea, many staff made spelling tests out of the words on pages 26 through 32. That identified our weaker spellers in terms of number of common words known. Also, it proved that our children are a lot better spellers than their fathers' and mothers' generation of children on whom the words were standardized in 1954. Maybe our children are just above average, but it did make us feel better about the job we and the parents are doing these days.

It has been an interesting, stimulating and valuable experience to do all the work involved in the development of this handbook. We hope that you, our colleagues in the classroom, will find using the handbook interesting, stimulating and valuable to use and that we will have contributed to the improvement of composition among all of our children.

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ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

These materials are available to assist school districts in oral and written communication programs. They may be obtained at your Educational Service District.

Development of Functional Communication Competencies: Pre-K - Grade 6, ed. by Barbara Sundene Wood. Speech Communication Association, 1977.
Development of Functional Communication Competencies: Grades 7-12, ed. by Barbara Sundene Wood. Speech Communication Association, 1977.

Provides teachers with the best educational theory and/or research and presents descriptions of classroom activities which assist the teacher in putting this theory into practice.

Handbook for Planning an Effective Writing Program: Kindergarten Through Grade Twelve. California State Department of Education, 1982.

Provides school administrators and teachers with a standard for assessing their existing writing programs and a tool for helping them design new programs. Both the content and teaching strategies of a writing program K-12 are addressed.

How to Help Your Child Become a Better Writer. National Council of Teachers of English.

Suggestions for parents on becoming an active participant in their child's education as a writer. Divided into two sections: "Things to do at Home" and "Things to do for School Writing Programs."

National Standards for Oral and Written Communications. Superintendent of Public Instruction, 1982.

A reprint of the Standards for a Basic Skills Writing Program (NCTE) and Standards for an Effective Oral Communication Program (American Speech-Language-Hearing Association and Speech Communications Association). Helpful as a starting point in identifying strengths and weaknesses of existing programs and the environment of support throughout the school.

Developing Oral Communication Skills. Superintendent of Public Instruction, 1982.

Includes two papers and a bibliography on oral communication. "Developing Oral Communication Skills, K-12" by Jody Nyquist and Barbara Clinton, is supportive material to the Wood series (Development of Functional Communication Competencies) and assists the practitioner in implementing effective oral communications skills which can be expected of students. The introduction by Phil Backlund and John Johnson includes some thoughts on speech communication research.

Saying it with Sounds and Symbols: Oral and Written Communications Framework. Superintendent of Public Instruction, 1982.

Provides a starting point for program review. Includes State Board of Education Goals for Common Schools, Program Goals, Responsibilities for Learning, and a Preliminary Evaluation Procedure.

Studying: A Key To Success....Ways Parents Can Help, by Ann Erickson. International Reading Association.

Gives tips on ways parents can help their children in learning to study effectively.

Writing Programs in Washington State. Superintendent of Public Instruction, 1982.

Includes a research synthesis on effective writing programs, followed by abstracts of classroom writing programs, including mini-grant projects. Bibliography.

Writing in the Schools: Improvement Through Effective Leadership, by Allan A. Glatthorn. National Association of Secondary School Principals, 1981.

Written for the administrator, this book describes the writing process--how to improve writing, how to supervise its instruction and how to evaluate a writing program.

Your Home is Your Child's First School, by Norma Rogers. International Reading Association. (Adapted from How Can I Help My Child Get Ready to Read?)

Suggestions for parents in assisting their children in the development of reading skills.

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